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No. X.

TRAP FOR VERMIN.

The sum of FIVE GUINEAS was this session given to Mr. JAMES SKINNER, 81, New Park-street, Southwark-bridge, for his Trap for Vermin; a model of which has been placed in the Society's repository.

TRAPS on the principle of the pitfall are more likely to be successful in taking all kinds of quadrupeds than box-traps and snap-traps, as less likely to excite suspicion in the animals for the capture of which they are intended. If to a trap of this description be superadded the advantages of setting itself after the capture of each animal, and of receiving and quietly destroying any given number that can be supposed likely to enter it in the course of a night, or any other interval, every desirable quality of a trap seems to be attained.

Mr. Skinner's trap consists of a kind of stall, adapted to the size of the animal intended to be taken, open at top and at one end. At the opposite end is a hook, on which the bait is placed. The hook is suspended loose from the top, and has a crook or angle at bottom, which when the hook hangs perpendicular lies immediately under a roller.

The frame which carries the roller is fastened to the floor of the trap, and the floor itself is capable of turning sideways on a hinge, furnished with a weighted lever projecting

on the other side, and a little more than a counterbalance to the floor. While the hook remains perpendicular, its angle, by its position under the roller, supports the floor when loaded with the weight of the animal intended to be taken; but when such animal by pulling at the bait has drawn it somewhat oblique, the angle will have slipped from under the roller, and the floor being now unsupported will incline on the side opposite to the hinge; the animal being suddenly thrown into an unusual position, and one unfavourable for sudden effort, and being prevented from clinging to the floor by the impossibility of forcing its claws into the sheet iron with which the floor is covered, will slide down into the box below, and the counterbalance will immediately cause the floor again to resume its former position. If the box is left empty the animal will be taken alive; but if it is intended to take more than one in succession the box should be filled with water, that the animal first taken may be dispatched before the arrival of the next.

Fig. 1 a side view in section; fig. 2 an end view, the lower part in section; fig. 3 a bird's-eye view, the bait, hooks, and bar, from which they hang, being removed; *aa* and *bb* the two sides of the trap; *cc* two end bars, which with the top bar *d*, and middle bar *e*, form a frame by which the two sides are united; *ff* two bait-hooks, hanging from the cross-bar *d*; *gg* two rollers on the bridges or staples *hh*; *ii* and *jj* the floors of the trap, they are hung on hinges *kk* and *kk*, with balance weights *l* and *m*, (seen by dotted lines in fig. 1), just heavy enough to bring up the floors, and make the rollers *gg*, which are fixed to

them, catch on the bait-hooks *ff*; the flap *j* is shown as held up by its roller *g*, in the angle or crook of the bait-hook; *nn* the two baits; the flap *ii* is shown in the act of inclining downwards, the animal having pulled the bait-hook from the roller *g*, and having slipped into the receptacle *oo*, which is partly filled with water; the balance-weight *l* then brings it up again, and re-sets it; *pp* parts of inclined planes for the animals to ascend by, when the situation does not allow the cistern to be sunk, so as to bring the floor on a level with the ground. The trap merely rests on the receptacle *o*, by the ledges *qq*; *rr* bent pieces of tin, which narrow the space on the bar *e*, and oblige the bait-hook to fall within the range of the roller *g*, and leave nothing for the claws of the animal to lay hold of at the moment of falling.

No. XI.

IMPROVED DEAD EYES.

The SILVER VULCAN MEDAL was this session presented to Mr. EDWARD CAREY, of Bristol, for his improved Dead Eyes for Shipping. The following communication has been received from him, and a model of his invention has been placed in the Society's repository.

SIR,

Bristol, April 19, 1825.

OBSERVING the very awkward manner in which they set up our men-of-war's lower and topmast shrouds, which